

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A computer implemented and user interactive method for brokering upgraded resources that provides greater software product functionality comprising the steps of:

providing a computer system that includes a software product that initially provides to the user a subset of software product functionality from a set of available functions,

collecting data describing user interaction with the subset of software product functionality,

analyzing automatically said data to determine whether at least one data pattern has been identified, and

initiating, by the computer system, communication with the user of an availability of product functionality that can be perceived by the user and that is within the set of available functions, but not within the subset of software product functionality when said at least one data pattern has been identified.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said collecting step comprises the step of collecting interval of use data for said software product.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said collecting step comprises the step of collecting statistical data regarding use of said software product.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said collecting step comprises the step of collecting demographic data regarding said user.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said collecting step comprises the step of collecting geographic data regarding said user.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of analyzing automatically comprises the step of determining whether any threshold has been satisfied by said collected data.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of analyzing comprises the step of applying a fuzzy algorithm to said collected data to determine whether a said data pattern can be identified.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said initiating step comprises using the computer system to interactively communicate with said user.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 8, wherein said initiating step further comprises interactively communicating by voice with said user.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 8 wherein said initiating step further comprises interactively communicating by a visual mechanism and a tactile response mechanism with said user.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of
collecting data from a group of users,
collecting user decisions from the group of users, and
determining when to offer greater software product functionality to at least one user
based upon at least group user data and decisions.

12. (previously presented) A computer implemented and user interactive method for brokering upgraded functionality in a voice responsive telephone personal assistant system comprising the steps of:

providing a computer system that includes a personal assistant system software product that initially provides to the user a subset of software product functionality from a set of available functions,

collecting data describing user interaction with the subset of software product functionality,

analyzing automatically said data to determine whether at least one data pattern has been

identified, and

initiating, by the personal assistant system, communication with the user of an availability of product functionality that is within the set of available functions, but not within the subset of software product functionality when said at least one data pattern has been identified.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12 wherein said analyzing step further comprises the step of identifying a data pattern when at least one user threshold has been satisfied.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim 13 further comprising the steps of collecting data from a group of users,
collecting user upgrade decisions from at least a portion of the group, and
determining when to offer said [greater] upgraded functionality to a user based upon at least group response data and decisions.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 13 wherein said initiating step further comprises
verbally and interactively making an offer, by said system, to said user for greater functionality in using said system.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said making step comprises interactively presenting said offer, by said system, for greater functionality in the context of a new message.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of offering greater functionality by the system to the user in multiple steps dependent at least upon said data patterns.

18. (currently amended) A computer implemented and user interactive method for brokering upgraded resources that provides greater software product functionality comprising the steps of:

providing a computer system that includes a software product that initially provides to the

user a subset of software product functionality from a set of available functions,
collecting use data describing use of the subset of software product functionality,
analyzing automatically by the computer said data to determine whether at least one use
threshold has been satisfied, and
initiating, by the computer system, communication with the user of an availability of
product functionality that can be perceived by the user and that is within the set of available
functions, but not within the subset of software product functionality when said at least one
threshold has been satisfied.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein said collecting step
comprises collecting interval of use data for said product.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein said collecting step
comprises collecting statistical data regarding use of said product.

21. (currently amended) A method for brokering upgraded functionality in a voice
responsive telephone personal assistant system for enabling greater functionality for a product
function in said system comprising the steps of:

providing a voice responsive telephone personal assistant system that includes a software
product that initially provides to the user a subset of software product functionality,

collecting use data describing use of said product function from a set of available
functions,

analyzing automatically said data to determine whether at least one use threshold has
been exceeded, and

initiating, by the voice responsive telephone personal assistant system, communication
with the user of an availability of product functionality that can be audibly perceived by the user
and that is within the set of available functions, but not within the subset of software product
functionality when said at least one threshold has been satisfied.

22. (currently amended) A computer implemented apparatus for brokering upgraded
resources for enabling greater functionality for a product function comprising:

means for providing to a user a subset of functionality of a software product from a set of

available functions,

means for collecting use data describing user interaction with said product function,

means for analyzing automatically said use data for determining whether at least one data pattern has been identified, and

means for initiating, by the apparatus, communication with a user of said product function an availability of said greater functionality within the set of available functions, but not within the subset of software product functionality when said at least one data pattern has been identified.

23. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said collecting means collects interval of use data for said product function.

24. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said collecting means collects statistical data regarding use of said product.

25. (currently amended) A computer implemented apparatus for brokering upgraded resources for enabling greater functionality for a product function comprising:

means for providing to a user a subset of functionality of a software product from a set of available functions,

means for collecting use data describing use of said product function,

means for analyzing automatically said use data for determining whether at least one use threshold has been exceeded, and

means for initiating, by the apparatus, communication with a user of product functionality that is within the set of available functions, but not within the subset of software product functionality when said at least one threshold has been satisfied.

26. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said collecting means collects interval of use data for said product function.

27. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said collecting means collects statistical data regarding use of said product.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving at the computer system user input indicating a selection of at a portion of the product functionality not within the subset of functionality of a software product.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of receiving at the computer system user input indicating a selection of at a portion of the product functionality not within the subset of functionality of a software product.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of receiving at the personal assistant system user input indicating a selection of at a portion of the product functionality not within the subset of functionality of a software product.
